The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news materials and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1591 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1941 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 21, NO. 40

AFL Council Praises Democracy; Scores Hitler and His System

Urges Aid to Britain and Her Allies; Stresses AFL Record in Avoiding Defense Industries Strikes; Endorses Wage Increases

Seattle, Wash.—In a memorable report to the 61st annual convention of the American Federation of Labor, the Executive Council rallied America's workers to do their utmost to defend America and preserve democracy and freedom.

The council denounced Hitler and all his works in the most sweeping terms. It dedicated America's strength to the task of making the national defense program a success. It urged the extension of every possible aid to Great Britain and her allies who are resisting Hitler's war machine.

"We realize we face a war situation that will require service and sacrifice of all," said the council's report. "We are willing to give in defense of our free institutions and to abolish slavery so that all persons may have the right to control their own lives.

"We know that the organized labor movement has the special responsibility of preserving and extending the application of principles of democracy and justice within its own immediate sphere of activity. Upon our ability to meet responsibilities depends in large measure the preservation of free institutions.

"We therefore solemnly urge all affiliated unions to renew their dedication to the cause of labor and human freedom so that our sacrifices and hardships may be made to serve the cause of humanity."

The report reviewed various phases of the defense program of chief interest to labor and emphasized the fine record of American Federation of Labor unions in avoiding strikes and work stoppages that would have delayed defense production.

The Executive Council asked the convention to consider such serious problems as the threat of defense unemployment due to priorities; the need for

Labor's Policies Toward World Crisis Outlined by AFL Executive Council

Seattle, Wash.—In a brief foreword to its report to the A. F. of L. Convention, the Executive Council summarized labor's policies toward the world crisis as follows:

"The past year has brought our nation progressively closer toward total establishment on a defense footing. The Proclamation of an Unlimited National Emergency of May 27, 1941, was substituted for the Proclamation of a Limited National Emergency of September 8, 1939. The Lend-Lease Act of March 11, 1941, served to increase defense production which will no doubt continue to increase as long as the world is involved in the present conflict. All of our problems and our lives in the immediate future will be overshadowed and dominated by the necessity of protecting our liberties and our institutions against the worldwide menace created by the efforts of a few nations to dominate adjacent peoples.

"Serious as this situation is, the American Federation of Labor stands ready to do its part in preserving democracy and the spirit of a free people can not be crushed, and that victory will bring broader and more stable world institutions assuring freedom in life and work.

"The year has also brought us greater confidence in the principles upon which the American Federation of Labor is founded. We believe that unionism is a way of life resting upon the conviction that workers have a right to a voice in the determination of the terms and conditions under which they work. From this basic right, lines of action and principles follow. These principles direct the outlook and course of living of persons who accept union membership with its rights and responsibilities. Real unionism does not come by law, by force or from expediency, but as a result of free conviction and understanding.

"Our gains in the past year have been steady and substantial. We have made definite progress in all the organization work in which we have engaged and we have succeeded in improving the economic life of the workers of the nation. We have made definite gains in spite of many obstacles which we encountered. For the protection we have won, which will present inescapable sacrifices, we urge that local central labor unions everywhere take leadership in establishing the concept and the practice that local unions must be maintained as agencies for human freedom and human welfare. Unions can not make themselves strong by disregarding the rights and interests of other groups of wage earners, nor can unions secure their rights by denying to others the rights and agencies which they have established.

"The Western Hemisphere labor unions afforde to wage earners unrestricted freedom of action through voluntary union organization. Our greatest concern should be to exercise our rights so as to perpetuate them, together with the other institutions of our country."

post-war planning right now to prevent a serious depression after the defense program is completed and the emergency is ended, and the complex problems dealing with the training of millions of new defense workers.

In a financial report preceding the Executive Council's annual review, Secretary-Treasurer George Meany revealed to the delegates that the membership of the American Federation of Labor is now at its highest point in history. As of Aug. 31, 1941, Mr. Meany revealed, there was a total of 4,569,061 dues-paying members in affiliated unions, besides a floating membership of perhaps another half-million.

The financial report disclosed that the American Federation of Labor had gained 321,813 new affiliates in the past year and had spent a total of $1,809,758 for organizing purposes.

The total financial receipts of the Federation for the year were $2,845,123 and the disbursements amounted to $2,611,365, leaving a balance on hand of more than a million dollars in the Federation's treasury at the end of the fiscal year.

The council urged the launching of a new and intensified organizing drive during the coming year among unorganized workers.

Asking the delegates to adopt a major change in its own makeup, the Council recommended that the number of A. F. of L. vice presidents be reduced from fifteen to thirteen.

The course of peace negotiations with the CIO were thoroughly reviewed and the Council placed full responsibility on John L. Lewis for the failure to achieve unity in labor's ranks.

Pointing to huge increases in corporation profits and the steadily mounting cost of living, the Council declared that the efforts of trade unions to secure higher wages for their members are "entirely justified." The Council said:

"It is the fixed purpose of the American Federation of Labor to continue to demand and secure higher wages and improved conditions of employment for the working men and women of our country."

The whole field of national and state legislation was thoroughly reviewed in the report and the fact that every piece of anti-labor legislation voted upon by Congress has been overwhelmingly defeated was emphasized.

The Council also recommended that the per capita tax paid by national and international unions to the Federation be reduced from two cents per member per month to one and a half cents.

Legal decisions of importance to labor were discussed and evaluated in the report, most noteworthy being the Supreme Court decision which knocked Thurman Arnold's anti-trust campaign against trade unions into the discard.

CLOSED SHOP PROVISION AIDS LABOR RELATIONS

Washington, D. C.—The American Council on Public Affairs made public a study of labor conditions which concluded that "labor relations are considerably smoother as a result of the closed shop."

The study was made for the private research organization by the Rev. Jerome L. Toner, of the faculty of St. Martins College, the Catholic University. He worked under the supervision of the Rev. Francis J. Haas, dean of the university's school of social science and special commissioner of conciliation in the Labor Department, and the Right Rev. John A. Ryan, director of the social action department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

Other conclusions reached were:

"Approximately 8,000,000 organized workers are under closed shop contracts.

"Closed shop conditions are dominant in the coal, clothing, printing, building trades, newspaper, metal trades, mining, and glass industries.

"As a result of sympathy toward the CIO because of Communist influence in its unions, a large number of employers long opposed to the closed shop have accepted it under A. F. L. contracts.

"Trade unions have demonstrated genuine responsibility under closed shop contracts and have contributed substantially to the improvement of production.

"The closed shop will probably be the rule rather than the exception within the next decade."

EDITORS DEMAND BRIDGES' OUSTER

Judge Sears' Findings Held to Justify CIO Leader's Deportation As a Communist

The recommendation of Judge Charles B. Sears, Special Justice Department Examiner, that Australian-born Harry Bridges, West Coast CIO leader, be deported for affiliation with the Communist party has brought favorable comments from the editors of many daily newspapers. Typical of these editorial expressions follow:

New York Herald Tribune: Justice Sears bluntly charges Bridges with Communist affiliation if not with actual membership in the party. And he says that it is by this Communist party of the United States, from the time of its inception in 1919 to the present time, is an organization that believes in, advises, advocates and teaches the overthrow by force and violence of the Government of the United States." If this is true, communism in this country is not just another political cause, but a conspiracy against a Nation. Obviously no such conspiracy should be allowed to flourish because of any mistaken belief that to uproot it would be illiberal.

Philadelphia Record: Bridges is an alien who has stood on the deck of a deportation ship. His continued presence here is not a matter of choice, but of sufferance. That he should, as an uninvited guest within this country, take a leading role in the operations of a body dominated by a foreign government should, in itself, be grounds enough for ordering him back to his native Australia.

The Communist party is certainly a dangerous subversive organization whose members deserve no special privileges from the United States.

Evening Star, Washington, D. C.: In a calm, measured appraisal of the activities of Harry Bridges, Australian alien seaman, Judge Charles B. Sears, presiding inspector for the Justice Department at the deportation proceedings, has found that the Australian-born officials of the Congress of Industrial Organizations are liable to expulsion from this country for membership in the Communist party.

By documented evidence and from the testimony of known principals in the proceedings, Judge Sears concluded that the Communist party is "an organization that believes in, advises, advocates and teaches the overthrow by force and violence of the Government of the United States," as the Alien Registration Act of 1940.

The record set out by Judge Sears will leave only to strengthen the general opinion that the Government in the past has been too tolerant of the subversive and kind.

New York Times: The recommendation made by former Judge Charles B. Sears, Special Deportation Examiner, that Harry Bridges be deported is in accordance with American conceptions of due process of law. Mr. Sears is a retired member of the New York Court of Appeals. He presided over a quasi-investigation service inspector at a ten-week hearing in San Francisco, and he has found that Mr. Bridges has been a member of the Communist party, and affiliated with it since 1935, when he helped to found both subversive organizations in the statutory sense.

Because of the conspiratorial nature of the organization, membership in the Communist party is difficult to prove. But Mr. Sears says Mr. Bridges has hardly troubled to conceal even in his public utterances the remarkable similarity of his views from time to time to his own. He vehemently opposed aid to Britain, denounced the war as capitalist, but the moment Hitler invaded Russia Mr. Bridges, though still a quasi-civilian military observer, came out for immediate aid to Russia, "the greatest anti-Fascist Power in Europe."

AFL AFFILIATE CHOSEN BY INSURANCE AGENTS

Washington, D. C.—Acting on a petition filed by Industrial and Ordinary Insurance Agents Union No. 21625, AFL affiliate, the National Labor Relations Board checked the membership of the union against the payroll of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. in Baltimore and thereby certified the union as the collective bargaining representative for all the district managers and canvassers employed in the four district offices in Baltimore.

This is the fourth district of the Baltimore Life that has requested bargaining rights through the American Federation of Labor, George L. Ross, AFL organizer announced.

Notables Address AFL Convention

Seattle, Wash.—During the first week of the annual convention of the American Federation of Labor a number of distinguished representatives of government and labor will address the delegates. Among those who have accepted invitation to speak are:

Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr.

Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins.

Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia.

Governor Harold E. Stassen of Minnesota.

Commander Lynn U. Stambaugh of the Labor Division.

Chairman Arthur J. Altmeyer, Social Security Board.

Assistant Secretary of Labor D. W. Tracy.

Bishop of Seattle Most Reverend Gerald Shaughnessy.

Edward J. Phelan, Acting Director I.L.O.

British Fraternal Delegates: George Thomson, Edward Hough.

Walter Schevenels, Secretary International Federation of Trade Unions.

METAL TRADES ASK PLANNING BOARD

Urge Plan to Change From War Economy to Peace; Navy Yards, Arsenals Pay Sought

Seattle, Wash.—One of the most successful conventions in the long history of the Metal Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor has just been concluded here.

First of the departmental conventions in advance of the convention of the A. F. of L. itself, the three-day meeting of the Metal Trades Department transacted much business of vital importance to wage-earners employed in the various metal crafts.

The delegates by unanimous vote called upon the Federal Government to establish a planning commission composed of labor, industry and agriculture to map out the program that will be necessary to shift from a war economy to a economy of peace. On such a commission labor must be represented, the convention declared.

In another important action the Metal Trades Department urged that the Navy and War Departments establish wage scales for workers in Navy Yards and arsenals where such pay boards, though authorized, have not yet been put in effect.

The country's foreign policy was endorsed in a resolution which commended the labor movement's pledge to "do its full duty in defending our country against the advances and activities of aggressor nations."

This resolution further pledged the Department and its affiliated national and international unions to "do everything within our power to muster the skilled labor necessary to man the ships and protect our country's instruments of national defense."

In an address to the convention Assistant Secretary of Labor Dan W. Tracy, former president of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, warmly praised the patriotism of the metal trades organizations in forwarding defense production during the last twelve months.

"Labor has cooperated most wholeheartedly and will continue to do so in the future," Mr. Tracy declared. "Organized labor, as represented by the Metal Trades Department, has never shirked its responsibilities."

Commander George W. Keller, U. S. N., read a message to the convention from Assistant Secretary of the Navy Bard in which some disappointment was expressed that the Metal Trades Department has not been "100 per cent successful in making effective the department's policy of avoiding strikes during the period of the national emergency."

Mr. Bard admitted, however, that stoppages participated in by metal trades unions affiliated with the A. F. of L. have been exceedingly few in number. But because of the menacing international situation, he explained, it is felt by the Navy that there must be no slowing whatever in defense production.

Responding to Mr. Bard's message, President John P. Frey of the Metal Trades Department declared that labor was appreciated and emphasized that trade union officials are not in the position of Army and Navy chiefs. In the Army and Navy, Mr. Frey pointed out, the commanding officers issue an order and every officer carries it into effect, and the private who fails to obey the orders is receiving his last pay check.

"We are a democratic institution and carry on our work in the democratic way," Mr. Frey said. "Our method is not to apply discipline and expel a member immediately he fails to carry out the policy of his international union. We endeavor to educate our members.

"It is a lengthier, more difficult task, but one that produces better results."

The convention re-elected President Frey, Secretary-Treasurer Joseph D. McDonough and Vice-Presidents Walter W. Britton (Metal Polishers), Roy Horn (Machinists), Thomas J. Shelley (Sheet Metal Workers), George Mackenzie (Plumbers), Joseph P. Ryan (Machinists) and J. A. Franklin (Boilermakers).

BUILDING TRADES ALL FOR DEFENSE

Hillman Criticized and Defended As Convention Speaker; CIO Raiding Scored

Seattle, Wash.—In a three-day convention that sparkled with decisive action and sharp debate, the Building and Construction Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor voted to give the Government every assurance of cooperation from its million and a half members for the successful completion of the defense construction program.

Speakers representing the chief Federal defense agencies bestowed high praise on the officers and members of the building trades unions for their fine record to date and urged them on to even greater accomplishments in the future.

Among these speakers was Sidney Hillman, associate director of OPM, who stressed the need of all-out effort to crush Hitler.

William Hutcheson, president of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, voiced vigorous objection to praising Hillman to the skies, declaring that his war record in this regard 100 per cent perfect.

Daniel J. Tobin, president of the Teamsters, also vigorously returned with sharp criticism of "certain department heads of the Government" for failing to speak out publicly against CIO raiding tactics which have a disruptive effect on production. He said he meant no criticism of Mr. Tracy, but pointed out that the latter should never forget the courtesy shown at the head of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers that in no way always easy or possible to prevent strikes.

Citing specific instances in Pittsburgh and Detroit of CIO attempts to stir up labor trouble and "bribe labor by AFL contracts," Mr. Tobin continued:

"Yet there is no punishment, no condemnation of such activity by the Government. The truth must be told to who is causing crimes against labor today!"

President William Green of the American Federation of Labor, who addressed the convention on its closing day, also condemned CIO attempts to enlist labor in building trades field. He recalled that when the CIO was formed labor was given to "organize the unorganized" and he asked how this policy could be squared with the raiding of unions that have long been established building trades unions.

"The CIO raiding is indefensible, violates standards of labor and is one of the greatest crimes against labor," Mr. Green charged.

Praising the record of the building trades unions in the defense program and their patriotism in the war crisis, Mr. Green said that while labor would willingly discipline itself and avoid strikes during the period of production, it will fight to the utmost all its powers against proposed legislation to outlaw strikes and abolish the right to strike. That way lies industrial servitude and forced labor, he declared.

Officers reelected were:

John P. Coyne, president; L. F. Lindelof, first vice president; Richard J. Gray, second vice president; William McSorley, third vice president; Daniel J. Tobin, fourth vice president; William L. Hutcheson, fifth vice president; Robert Byron, sixth vice president; George Masterton, seventh vice president; Edward J. Gainor, eighth vice president, and Herbert Rivers, secretary-treasurer.

Two of the most important resolutions adopted referred to the national defense program's interference with jurisdictional disputes.

One urged that unnecessary approval of jurisdictional disputes, which that they can be made effective for both defense housing and housing in private industry.

The other urged the Federal Housing Administration to give increased aid to building builders in national defense areas where more housing is still needed.

AFL UNIONS CERTIFIED BY MEDIATION BOARD

Washington, D. C.—The National Mediation Board certified two unions and two carriers for the collective bargaining representatives for certain groups of employes on two railroads.

The Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes was certified to represent the maintenance of way employes of the Virginian Railway Company following an election. The AFL unit received 468 votes out of 503. The board certified the Joint Council Dining Car Conference, AFL No. 351, Hotel and Restaurant Employes International Alliance to represent dining car cooks, waiters, waitress-in-charge, coach waiters, porter-waiters, counter-porters, lounge and parlor car porters, cocktail lounge porter-waiters, buffet attendants, and coach-cafe cooks and waiters employed by the Chicago, Rock Island and Gulf Railroad Company. In the election held at 205 field votes cast the AFL unit received 195.

Green Pledges Full AFL Support To Roosevelt's Anti-Axis Policy

Backs Sea Freedom and Democracy Protection Everywhere; Denounces Hitler Brutality; Upholds Labor's Rights

Seattle, Wash.—President William Green opened the sixty-first annual convention of the American Federation of Labor here with a ringing declaration that if America feels it necessary to "take more decisive action" to maintain freedom of the seas and "to protect democracy throughout the world we will stand by the President of the United States and follow his leadership in every way."

The delegates sprang to their feet in a cheering ovation as president Green threw down this challenge of open warfare to Hitler and the Axis powers.

"There are no isolationists in the American Federation of Labor," Mr. Green shouted. "We have no left wing and no right wing. We speak as one, we act as one, we walk as one and we fight as one."

Standing on the flag festooned platform in Senator Auditorium, jammed to the doors with delegates and visitors, Mr. Green evoked continuous demonstrations of enthusiasm when he declared: "We understand, as realistic, practical men and women that numerical growth in our movement such as ours carries with it grave responsibilities. And so while we assemble in this convention under the most suspicious circumstances, in a delightful environment among people who will extend to us a full measure of hospitality, in a friendly city, we are conscious of the fact that we are facing days when we will be subjected to the most severe tests, and for that reason we shall approach our task, the discussion of economic, social and industrial problems in this great congress of labor, with a sense of deep responsibility. We are here as American citizens, first, and we place that above and beyond everything else.

"The welfare of America, the promotion of our social order will stand above and beyond every other consideration that may be dealt with by this convention. We feel that every legislative act taken in this convention must have as its primary purpose the preservation, our form of government, our freedom and our liberty, and the promotion of the general welfare of the people.

"We could not meet on an occasion such as this without taking into account the chaos, the cruelty, the war, the bitterness that prevails throughout the world. Our feelings have been aroused because of the cruel, brutal treatment of democracy, that we would give to the government every ounce of support we could extend it, that we would serve as skilled, trained men, giving the best we have in the promotion of our defense program.

"In addition to that, we ask our great President, the President of the United States, to tell the people in Great Britain that we propose to extend to them every aid possible in order that they may defeat this cruel dictator ravaging Europe.

"We are now encouraged and inspired to go further than ever before in the adoption of an official declaration, I refer to this convention. We have learned so much during the past year. We have read of the tragedies that have been taking place in the democracies of Europe. For that reason now, understanding more clearly the issues at stake and the tragic consequences that must follow in the event the forces of democracy are beaten, we of the American Federation of Labor are going the rise to new heights, and we are going to advise the President of the United States that we will give all we have in support of his program, that we will stand by him and behind him and all associated with him, and we will say to him further that if it is necessary to take more decisive action in order to maintain freedom of the seas, and to protect democracy throughout the world, we will stand by him and follow to the bitter end.

"There can be no mistake as to the attitude of the American Federation of Labor and those whom we have the honor of representing in this convention, and I am happy to tell our distinguished visitor here, that there is no left wing, there is no right wing, they may have communism, fascism, or nazism, but the American Federation of Labor will give all they have in support of his program, that we will stand by him and behind him and all associated with him, and we will say further to him that if it is necessary to take more decisive action in order to maintain freedom of the seas, and to protect democracy throughout the world, we will stand by him and follow to the bitter end.

"Behold the picture abroad. Decent, law-loving people now governed by force, the right of self-government taken from them; racial hate and religious intolerance substituted for freedom; no help in accordance with the dictates of conscience; freedom of assemblage; the right to work in accordance with the notion of one's own choosing—all these have been taken away.

"And yet in all of these countries there is a great people, Belgium, of Holland, the Netherlands, France, Czechoslovakia, Norway and the Balkan states, and every one of these countries that has been invaded by this cruel, brutal foe.

"What did they do? Why did they not resist? They were a peace-loving, quiet, unassuming people seeking to work out their own destinies in accordance with the laws of God and of nature.

"And yet labor in all of these countries has been regimented, involuntary servitude and forced labor substituted for free labor. These countries are voiceless nations; their men and women have been robbed of the right to mobilize their economic power and use it for the purpose of advancing and promoting their social and industrial welfare.

"Shall that come to Great Britain and shall it come to America? Can we sit idly by and wait until it reaches our shores?"

Green's strong statement was given by American Federation of Labor members to the national defense program and spoke against any restraint in avoiding strikes.

Green declared that the convention will take decisive action to prevent defense unemployment arising from priorities, to push for a post-war peace and reconstruction program, to stimulate and promote a vast-scale housing and construction program, and to protect labor's rights from being destroyed.

Mr. Green made it clear that the A. F. of L. will oppose any proposal to freeze wages at present levels, declaring this is not the right way to curb inflation.

He promised that when the war ends, representatives of labor at the peace conference will see to it that restoration of the rights of labor in all enslaved countries will be incorporated in the peace treaty.

Following the opening session, Mayor Milliken of Seattle and Governor Langlie of Washington praised the record of the A. F. of L. unions in this section of the country and gave the delegates a hearty welcome. Mr. Milliken referred to the fact that Seattle is one of the best organized cities in the nation and is, in fact, an "American Federation of Labor city."

Tobin Exposes Plot of Communists To Undermine Teamsters Brotherhood

Seattle, Wash.—With a blistering attack on Harry Bridges, President Daniel J. Tobin of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, exposed a secret plot by Communist agitators in this country to undermine and take over the teamsters' union.

Addressing delegates from eleven states and British Columbia at the Western Conference of Teamsters, Tobin declared:

"The plan of the innermost leaders of the Communist Party is to direct their main attack on the Teamsters Union. There are two reasons for this attack. The Teamsters Union is a militant, fighting organization and the second is that this union is the greatest obstruction to Communism.

"They realize the paralyzing power that this union could use to stop all industry and they want to seize that power for that purpose. They are encouraging Communists to become members of our union, particularly in the locals for the sole purpose of creating discord."

Turning on Bridges, Tobin said:

"There is no doubt in my mind that he is guilty. Also is guilty of fostering and encouraging organizations detrimental to the United States. Bridges would like to destroy the solidarity of labor than all the other enemies of labor combined. He has created bitterness and dissension."

In an eloquent appeal for loyal devotion to the national defense program, Tobin declared that the United States must do all it can to crush Nazism and prevent the bombs of totalitarianism from ever reaching our shores. He advocated the strongest support from those states can be out of immediately.

A plan to organize the Solid South was laid before delegates by Dave Beck, Vice President of the Teamsters.

Beck said that the only possible way to organize the South is to organize the rest of the country so thoroughly that the flow of commodities from those states can be cut off completely.